

# Serving Our Generation

*Elder Stephen Skinner*

**Scripture Lesson:** Acts 13:14-43

**Text: Acts 13:36** *For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption:*

David wrote in Psalm, "You will not leave My soul in Hell; neither will you suffer Your Holy One to see corruption." But, David, as all others, "saw corruption." The spices used on bodies did not keep back corruption, they just were to conceal the unpleasant odors.

## **I. What Is It To Serve Our Own Generation?**

Though our citizenship is in Heaven, we yet live on earth so we should seek to serve our own generation.

1. We are not to be a slave to it. Not to take the habits, customs, and ideas of it. The Gospel of Christ is for all generations--to save sinners from Hell and to fit them for Heaven. The man best serves his generation by standing by the Truth of God. Men are "always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." David was the Master of his age. We are made kings and priests by God.
2. We are not to fly from it. Go into the world and preach the Gospel. Do not be made a coward and be muzzled like a dog.
3. It is to perform the common duties of life. David held a shepherd's staff before he had a scepter.
4. It is to be ready when the occasion comes. David never sought to be famous, but was ready when God called. God knows where to find you--you need not advertise yourself to His Omniscience.
5. It is to maintain true religion. David was a man after God's own heart. If only 10 righteous men had been in Sodom it would have been spared--the world today only escapes the righteous judgment of God because of God-fearing righteous men.
6. It is to continue to serve all our life. Young men can be proud of "what they intend to do." Or, they make a vigorous start and then suddenly stop.
7. It is to prepare those who are to come after us. David stored up gold and silver and plans for the temple.

## **II. What Parts Of Our Generation Can We Serve?**

"None of us lives to himself." We either help or hinder those among whom we dwell--a stepping stone or a stumbling stone.

1. The part, like to the sun, that is setting. They will soon be gone. Comfort them, strengthen them, help them. Praise the grace that has upheld them through their long pilgrimage. Make their descent to the grave as easy as you can. Console them, cheer them, give them respect that is due their many years. Learn from their experience.
2. The part that is shining. Those working hard, bearing the burden and heat of the day. Seek to sustain their hands in every possible way. Help them as they fill in the gaps left by those leaving.

3. The part that is rising. Do all we can for this generation before we fall asleep.
  - A. They are most reachable. Teach them the things of God.
  - B. They are most impressionable. They have not yet leaned toward evil ways. The clay is soft--mold it for God. Most is to be gained, they have long yet to live and serve.  
Most people are saved when they are young.
  - C. Those converted as children often make strong saints.
  - D. Christ specified the young--Feed my sheep, feed my sheep, feed my lambs.
  - E. They are now surrounded by dangers. Many are the traps for young people. Give them a backbone of moral honesty; teach them they are not the center of everything. Young people are richly blessed when they have godly friends, parents and teachers who shall serve their generation by leading them in the paths of peace.

### III. Debtors Must Serve.

**Romans 8:12** *Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.*

1. We are debtors to the past. Previous generations have suffered sword and fire to keep the faith; a generation before us, prayed for us, taught us.
2. We are debtors to the present. The world's only hope of hearing the truth is the church. Sin abounding makes this debt to the present greater.
3. We are debtors to the future. What will hand to the future?
4. We are debtors to all classes of mankind.
5. We are most of all debtors to Our Savior. Not to the law and justice--that has been paid. Jesus paid it all.
6. We are indebted to God's sovereignty, love, and immutability.
7. We are debtors to God because of our relationship to Him. He is our Father; we are sons (Christ's brethren).

### IV. What Will Happen To Us When Our Savior Is Finished With Us Here?

Even when passing away David served his generation by giving Solomon some last words, "*I go the way of the earth; be you strong and show yourself a man.*"

Romans 14:8

*For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.*

1. David did not die until his work was finished. Do not want to die until your work is finished. Be willing to live for 250 years, if God wills it. "I wish it were Saturday night." Don't be in hurry to go home.
2. When his work was finished, he fell asleep. We are told, in the early days of Christianity, when. Believers were falling asleep in Jesus, their friends did not bid them "good-bye," but "good night." (hymn)
3. David's dying was like going to sleep. Death for Believers is different; many die glorious deaths.  
*Ecclesiastes 7:2 It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.*  
If you believe in Jesus, then dying is no more than going to sleep at night.
4. "Behold, I show you a great mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed."  
And, those who sleep in Christ shall awake in Resurrection splendor and together we shall serve our Lord forever in His Temple. Meanwhile, serve your own generation by the will of God--and if the Lord tarries, you will fall asleep, even as David did.

**V. Lessons To Be Learned.**

1. Humility. If we are servants and debtors we should never be proud. Grace is the source of good works, talents, etc. Therefore, the more we are given the more we owe.
2. Zeal. Though we cannot pay the debt, we can acknowledge it. I am a debtor, I must serve God.
3. Paying (acknowledging) our debt must come before our pleasure.